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Recommendations for Travelers to Southeast Asia from the Wisconsin Division of Public Health

Here are some important things you need to know about avian influenza (bird flu) to keep you and your family healthy when you are traveling to Southeast Asia to visit friends and relatives.

Since late 2003, an outbreak of avian influenza (bird flu) in Southeast Asia and other countries has resulted in the deaths of millions of birds, including domestic chicken and ducks. This outbreak is caused by an influenza virus called avian influenza A (H5N1). In addition to sickness and death in birds, more than 140 people have gotten sick from this bird flu, and more than half of them have died. Most people who got bird flu had close contact with infected chickens or ducks. Sometimes chickens or ducks may be infected with the bird flu virus but not look sick.

To protect you and your family from the bird influenza virus when you travel to your home country:

Before you leave

- Learn about avian influenza A (H5N1). Share this information with family or friends that may be traveling with you. For more information, visit this website:
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/index.htm>
- Be sure you are up to date with all your shots, at least 4–6 weeks before travel.
- Receive typical (seasonal) influenza vaccine at least 2 weeks before travel.

During your stay in Asia

- Avoid contact with all birds, whether live, sick, or dead, and avoid contact with anything that may have been touched by poultry or their droppings.
- Avoid places such as poultry farms or bird markets.
- Influenza viruses are killed by heat, so you should thoroughly cook all foods from poultry, including eggs and blood.
- Wash your hands often with warm water and soap to help protect you and prevent spreading viruses and other germs to others:
 - Always wash your hands after using the toilet, before eating or smoking, after touching any animal or surfaces that might be soiled, if you sneeze or cough into your hands, and before and after preparing food.
 - Alcohol-based hand gels may be used if soap is not available.

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- Always cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze, preferably with a tissue.
- If you become sick with a fever and get a cough, sore throat, have trouble breathing, or any illness needing medical attention, a U.S. consulate can help you find medical services.
- Tell the doctor about any possible exposures to sick birds that might have bird flu, or to very sick people.
- Do not travel while you are sick unless you are going to see the doctor or to a clinic.
- Avoid being around others as much as possible when you are sick.
- **DO NOT BRING ANY BIRDS OR BIRD PARTS, INCLUDING EGGS OR FEATHERS, BACK TO THE UNITED STATES.** This action is illegal and could expose you or others to the bird flu.

After you return home from your trip:

- You do not need to restrict your normal daily activities if you do not become ill.
- Avoid contact with live poultry and pigs for 10 days after you return.
- If you get sick with fever and have a cough, sore throat, or trouble breathing within 10 days after you return home, call your doctor or clinic.
- If you become sick, before going to the clinic, be sure to tell them what your symptoms are, where you have traveled, and if you touched or had close contact poultry or very sick people while you were there. This way, the clinic can be aware that you have traveled to an area where there is bird flu and can arrange for certain tests to be performed free of charge.

For more information on bird flu or other travel health information, please contact:

- Your doctor or clinic
- A Travel Clinic
- CDC Traveler's Health (toll free) at: 1-877-394-8747
- The Bureau of Communicable Disease and Preparedness at 608-267-9003